

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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S-E-C-R-E-T

COUNTRY Bulgaria

REPORT

SUBJECT Simulated Atomic and Gas Warfare Maneuvers

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This is UNEVALUATED Information

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1. During the simulated atomic and gas warfare maneuvers in late September 1954, approximately 10,000 troops of the Bulgarian Army fought only a theoretical enemy. The one exception to this was for the short period when the army relieved a theoretical group of allied troops and a group of 300-400 soldiers, representing the enemy, were routed from a very well fortified area, (Dalgatrayini Pekhotni Positsii; Longterm Infantry Positions), west of Varinako. At this point, the enemy had machine made trenches and heavy machine gun emplacements, which is what is referred to as "superior technical equipment", in previous reports on these maneuvers.
2. During the gas attack, or Phase 1 of the maneuvers, the troops were not told specifically what gas was supposedly going to be used; they were told only that their positions would be attacked by Techni Khimicheski Veshtestva (Liquid Chemical Substances) and this substance was going to be sprayed. No names, code names, symbols, or nicknames were mentioned. The warning for the gas attack was given by one long continuous blast of a siren, plus the oral signal: Khimicheska Opasnost (Chemical Danger). During the maneuvers, nothing was said about the effects which the gas would have; however, in the training school, after the maneuvers, the chemical officer gathered the soldiers together by groups and acquainted them with the various types of gases and the reactions which the human body would have to them. [redacted] since February 1955, these chemical lessons have been increased among the troops.
3. The gas attack was administered by a single aircraft, which flew over all positions where the army was concentrated. [redacted] this plane was theoretically dropping gas bombs. [redacted] type of aircraft this was, but it resembled a fighter plane, possibly a little larger, and was a single-wing, slow-flying, propeller-driven aircraft, not a jet. This plane passed over the positions only once. This gas attack was simultaneously carried out against all military troops taking part in these maneuvers and covered an area 3 kilometers long and 400 meters wide.

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4. No actual bombs or any other techniques were employed in order to represent an actual gas attack. No actual spray techniques were used by the aircraft; in order to demonstrate how the guns would look after an attack, the chemical officer took several small tree branches with leaves, dipped them into a pail of water and gently sprinkled the guns until small droplets completely covered them. He then proceeded to instruct the soldiers in how to decontaminate the gun.
5. Members of the chemical crews wore rubber suits, consisting of four parts as follows:
- a. A helmet type S.M.-I anti-gas mask;
 - b. Rubber, one-piece coveralls (Gashterison), which fastened in front with a zipper from the waist to the collar. This suit had a high collar (approximately 8 cm. wide), which when turned up lay over the gas mask at the back of the head and in front turned out to provide a nesting place for the wearer's chin. This suit had long sleeves and was made from a thin, very pliable and flexible rubber. It was very light weight and the color was a dark gray. [redacted] the suits were very solidly made and could be torn only if snagged by some sharp object; because of this, the crew acted very freely with their suits. No reinforcing was obvious in the suits and they looked as though they were made from pure rubber, with no other material used. There was no belt, elastic nor draw strings on the suit;
 - c. Gloves, reaching up to the shoulders and having five fingers, rather than being the mitten type, were made of the same type of rubber and were worn over the sleeves of the suit. The gloves appeared to be slightly thinner than the coveralls, and were slightly lighter gray in color;
 - d. Socks, made from a special canvas-like material, were made large enough to be worn over the wearer's boots and reached to just below the knees, where they were fastened by a piece of cloth. These socks had been coated with a special kind of grease, which was yellow in color, and appeared to be very soft and sticky; yet it did not come off on the hands when touched, and did not melt in the heat of the sun.

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[redacted] these suits were to be used for both gas and nuclear attacks. Each squad in the artillery units, which is usually composed of nine men, was supposed to be furnished with three of these suits. These three suits were issued to certain of the soldiers in each squad. The remainder of the troops were issued only "throw-away" capes, socks, and gas masks. The capes were carried in the anti-gas mask bags, while the socks were carried in their haversacks.

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